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WZ 7

29 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting at his residence with President Johnson
10:00 a.m. - Thursday - November 28th.
for approximately 30 minutes

1. The President reviewed the Checklist and made the following comments:

a. Are we doing all possible to keep Venezuelan authorities informed? I reviewed briefly our penetrations and our activities.

b. What is the real future in South Vietnam? The President expressed the desire for an objective appraisal and any recommendations that I might have for modification of policy, changes of personnel and draw up a rough estimate of what is the outlook. The President continues to be concerned over public reaction and Congressional reaction against our activities in South Vietnam. The President is obviously opposed to Lodge (his opposition goes back to conflicts in the Senate). He asked for recommendations as to who would be a good man and who could run the American team.

He noted Item b. in the Check list and I pointed out the press exaggeration and distortion which appeared in the New York Times. He asked that I personally meet with the head of the Times in New York, pointing out how such distorted reports seriously damage the American interests. I stated that I would do this.

We discussed Item 2.f. having to do with the high level of communications traffic and I stated that this could be considered as an unfavorable indicator.

The President noted without comment report on Israel, USSR, India military aid and Burma.

c. The President asked what the outlook was with Greece. I told him that we expected that Karamanlis would eventually be restored to power. The President stated that he had vigorously opposed our

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withdrawal of assistance to Karamanlis, which he felt had a great deal to do with his loss of office.

d. I pointed out to the President that we could expect some trouble in Brazil.

e. The President asked about the future of Prime Minister Inonu of Turkey. I stated that we expected that his government would fall and that he would lose office soon after his return.

f. I repeated to the President briefly my meeting with President Macapagal which is covered in a separate memorandum prepared by Mr. Colby.

g. Also I raised the question of the importance of our taking initiative in the Indonesia matter by working with Macapagal. We might bring Indonesia round and also straighten out the Malayasia problem.

2. The President then turned to Cuba. He asked how effective our policy was and what was the future of Cuba. He asked how effective the economic denial program was and how we planned to dispose of Castro. He said he did not wish any repetition of any fiasco of 1961, but he felt that the Cuban situation was one that we could not live with and we had to evolve more aggressive policies. He looks to us for firm recommendations. In this connection we should prepare a briefing and also we should study carefully various courses of action.

3. The President then raised the question of the deal between the Rumanian government and the Ferguson company for the procurement of a steel mill and asked whether I thought this was a good thing. I replied affirmatively, stating that in my opinion economic relations with the satellites would tend to break down the closeness of ties between the satellites in Moscow and this should be a very definite policy effort on our part. I noted that Moscow had disengaged the Rumanian steel mill because it did not fit into their pattern of economic integration of the satellites and the Soviet Union. The President then stated that he agreed that we should attempt to pull the satellites away. He then brought up the question of Tito and asked if I could give him the name of the best man who could serve as Ambassador to Yugoslavia who would be able to "win the girl away from Khrushchev." He said that in his opinion this man should be an experienced, able man, perhaps in his 50's and preferably a Republican, who could carry the confidence of the Republicans and a personality who could win Tito's confidence and allegiance. I responded by stating that I would prepare a list of competent people who I felt could

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serve in this capacity and also in others. In this connection, the President stated that he was not satisfied with the Ambassador-elect to Yugoslavia and had therefore held up the appointment. His request for help and the suggestion of names in connection with Yugoslavia and the satellites is along the same line as to who would be a good representative in South Vietnam.

4. The President asked concerning our relationships on the Hill. I said that they were excellent. The only problem was a continual harangue for a Joint Committee on Intelligence. I said that I felt that if Senator Russell would expand his Committee to include Fulbright and Hickenlooper, and Vinson expand his Committee to include two members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, that the issue would be put to rest. The President said he thought this was a good idea and that he would speak to both Fulbright and Russell about it.

5. I then reviewed the brochure on the OXCART by giving the President a broad picture of this development. I explained that surfacing of it was a problem which had been under consideration by Defense and CIA which I had discussed with President Kennedy. I said that McNamara was pressing for a rather early release but that President Kennedy felt that the timing of the surfacing was of very great importance. I said that I felt that the timing was even of greater importance now and I had some reservations about surfacing this vehicle in the first few days of President Johnson's administration. The President seemed to agree and suggested that McNamara, Rusk, Bundy and I meet with him on Friday for a discussion of this problem.

No arrangements were made as to the time of Friday morning's briefing.

JAM/mfb (tape)

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